

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 PARIS 10291 01 OF 02 081003Z

12

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ARA-06 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 SAJ-01 COME-00 EB-07 LAB-04 SIL-01 /078 W

----- 108979

R 081218Z APR 76

FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9626

INFO AMCONSUL BORDEAUX

AMCONSUL LYON

AMCONSUL MARSEILLE

AMCONSUL MARTINIQUE

AMCONSUL NICE

AMCONSUL STRASBOURG

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 PARIS 10291

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PLAB, PINT, FR

SUBJECT: VIEWS ON FRENCH POLITICAL SCENE BY LABOR

LEADER BERGERON

REF: PARIS 10290

1. DURING LUNCH AT THE RESIDENCE ON APRIL 6, FO LEADER ANDRE BERGERON GAVE HIS VIEWS ON A NUMBER OF IMPORTANT INTERNAL POLITICAL ISSUES WHICH WILL PREOCCUPY FRANCE FOR THE NEXT TWO YEARS. HE ALSO MADE SOME INTERESTING COMMENTS ON POLITICAL LEADERS, ALL OF WHOM HE KNOWS PERSONALLY. HIS VIEWS DO NOT NECESSARILY CONFORM TO OUR JUDGMENT AS SEEN IN VARIOUS REPORTS THE EMBASSY HAS MADE ON THESE SUBJECTS, BUT THEY DO PROVIDE A WELL-INFORMED OPINION BY SOMEONE OUTSIDE OF GOVERNMENT WHO HAS CONSTANT CONTACT WITH FRENCHMEN AT ALL LEVELS (LABOR AND GOF LEADERS, CADRES AND WORKERS) AND IN ALL AREAS OF THE COUNTRY. BERGERON IS SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE SECOND LARGEST LABOR UNION IN FRANCE (900,000 MEM-
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 PARIS 10291 01 OF 02 081003Z

BERS, COMPARED TO 1.5 - 2 MILLION FOR THE CGT AND

800,000 FOR THE CFDT).

2. GOF LEADERS: BERGERON ASSESSES PRESIDENT GISCARD D'ESTAING AS WELL MEANING AND INTELLIGENT BUT LACKING IN EXPERIENCE AND STRENGTH ESPECIALLY COMPARED TO POMPIDOU. HAVING MOVED TOO QUICKLY FROM FINANCE MINISTER TO THE PRESIDENCY, HE NEEDS MORE TIME AND APPRENTICESHIP TO BECOME A HEAVYWEIGHT. BERGERON ADDED JOKINGLY THAT HE HAS TOLD GISCARD THIS TO HIS FACE AND REPEATED IT PUBLICLY (PARIS 08638). PRIME MINISTER CHIRAC, HOWEVER, BERGERON FINDS SOLID AND VERY ACTIVE, BUT UNFORTUNATELY STILL MARKED BY BEING A MEMBER OF THE OLD REGIME.

3. FRANCOIS MITTERRAND: BERGERON LAMENTED THAT, DESPITE A FRIENDSHIP EXTENDING OVER MANY YEARS, HE HAS NEVER BEEN ABLE TO GET TO KNOW MITTERRAND AND DOES NOT FEEL HE CAN TRULY JUDGE HIM. BERGERON REFERRED TO HIS CLOSE RELATIONSHIP WITH GUY MOLLET AND OTHER SFIO LEADERS, AND SAID THAT HIS RELATIONSHIP WITH MITTERRAND IS NOT AND PROBABLY WILL NEVER BE AS CLOSE AS WITH FORMER SOCIALIST LEADERS. BERGERON ADDED THAT HIS MOST RECENT CONVERSATIONS WITH MITTERRAND HAVE FOCUSED ON THE PS/PC ALLIANCE, WITH MITTERRAND TAKING GREAT PAINS TO TRY TO CONVINCE HIM THAT THE PS WILL BE ABLE TO CONTROL THE PC IN THE FUTURE. BERGERON SAID THAT HE DID NOT FIND MITTERRAND'S ARGUMENTATION VERY CONVINCING, WHICH PROBABLY HAS SOME BEARING ON THE FACT THAT THEIR PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP IS NOT CLOSER. BERGERON CONTINUED THAT HE CANNOT ANSWER AND IS NOT EVEN INTERESTED IN THE THEORETICAL QUESTION OF WHETHER THE PS CAN OR CANNOT CONTROL THE PC. WHAT IS IMPORTANT TO HIM ARE THE FACTS, AND THE FACT IS THAT MITTERRAND TOLD HIM FLATLY THAT IF THE LEFT WINS IN 1978, HE WILL GIVE THE COMMUNISTS SIX TO SEVEN MINISTRIES.

4. 1978 LEGISLATIVE ELECTIONS: BERGERON'S JUDGMENT ON THIS ISSUE WAS THAT THE LEFT DOES INDEED HAVE A CHANCE TO WIN, BUT THAT THE RACE WOULD BE VERY CLOSE. HE ESTIMATED THAT THE LEFT WOULD NEED 56 PERCENT OF THE POPULAR VOTE

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 PARIS 10291 01 OF 02 081003Z

TO WIN A MAJORITY IN THE ASSEMBLY, GIVEN THE FACT THAT THERE IS NO PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION IN FRANCE. HE ADDED THAT EVEN WINNING 51 PERCENT OF THE POPULAR VOTE WOULD CAUSE THE GOVERNMENT MAJOR PROBLEMS, AND ADDED THAT IF THE LEFT DID WIN, THERE WOULD PROBABLY BE MASS DEMONSTRATIONS AND OCCUPATION OF FACTORIES IN THE FOUR TO SIX MONTHS WHICH FOLLOW.

5. FO RELATIONS WITH THE PS: THOUGH A MEMBER OF THE PS FOR 40 YEARS, BERGERON SAID THAT HE HAS BEEN FORCED TO OPPOSE THE PS BECAUSE OF THE COMMON PROGRAM AND THE PS' ALLIANCE WITH THE PC. WITH RESPECT TO FUTURE ELECTIONS, BERGERON EXPECTS IN GENERAL TO REFRAIN FROM TAKING SIDES BETWEEN MAJORITY AND OPPOSITION CANDIDATES. HE MAY, HOWE-

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 PARIS 10291 02 OF 02 081003Z

12
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ARA-06 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 SAJ-01 COME-00 EB-07 LAB-04 SIL-01 /078 W
----- 109005

R 081218Z APR 76
FM AMEMBASSY PARIS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9627
INFO AMCONSUL BORDEAUX
AMCONSUL LYON
AMCONSUL MARSEILLE
AMCONSUL MARTINIQUE
AMCONSUL NICE
AMCONSUL STRASBOURG

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 PARIS 10291

VER, HAVE TO MAKE SOME SPEECHES CRITICAL OF THE GOVERNMENT, IN ORDER NOT TO CUT HIMSELF OFF FROM THE MANY MEMBERS IN THE FO WHO VOTE FOR THE OPPOSITION CANDIDATES.

6. 1978 CONSTITUTIONAL QUESTION: BERGERON HAD NO PAT FORMULA FOR RESOLVING THE CONSTITUTIONAL QUESTION, SHOULD THE LEFT WIN IN 1978, OF GOVERNING WITH A MAJORITY PRESIDENT AND AN OPPOSITION PRIME MINISTER. HE OBSERVED THAT SINCE THERE WOULD BE NO POINT IN THE

PRESIDENT NAMING A PRIME MINISTER WITH A COMPLETELY DIFFERENT ORIENTATION THAN HIS OWN, GISCARD WOULD EITHER HAVE TO CHANGE HIS OWN POLICIES (WHICH BERGERON DID NOT CONSIDER LIKELY) OR DISSOLVE PARLIAMENT AND HOLD NEW ELECTIONS IN THE HOPE OF REVERSING THE OUTCOME. IF THE RESULTS WERE THE SAME IN THE SECOND AS IN THE FIRST ROUND, THAT IS IN FAVOR OF THE OPPOSITION, GISCARD WOULD HAVE LITTLE CHOICE BUT TO CHANGE HIS OWN
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 PARIS 10291 02 OF 02 081003Z

POLICIES TO COINCIDE WITH THOSE OF THE PS-PC COALITION.

7. FUTURE OF FO: BERGERON CLAIMED THAT FO IS THE FASTEST GROWING OF THE FRENCH LABOR UNIONS. THIS POINT IS NOT ALWAYS APPRECIATED, HE SAID, BECAUSE YOUNG WORKERS FROM THE LIBERAL, CHRISTIAN SOCIAL CLASS, FORMERLY THE BACKBONE OF THE FO, WERE LATELY TURNING MORE TO OTHER UNIONS, AND NEW RECRUITS OF OTHER UNIONS TEND TO BE MORE ACTIVE AND VOCAL THAN FO MEMBERS.

8. COMMENT: BERGERON WAS CLEARLY NO MORE OPTIMISTIC ON FRENCH ISSUES THAN HE WAS ON THE INTERNATIONAL SCENE (REFTEL). HE SEES FRENCH POLITICS BECOMING MORE TENSE AND ABRASIVE AS ELECTIONS APPROACH. IN THE MEANTIME HE OBSERVES A DEFINITE LACK OF LEADERSHIP ON BOTH SIDES, BUT ESPECIALLY IN THE GOF. THIS, COUPLED WITH THE SOCIAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL PROBLEMS THAT THE ELECTIONS COULD BRING, SPELL FOR BERGERON AN UNCERTAIN PERIOD FOR FRANCE IN THE MONTHS AHEAD.

RUSH

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: FOREIGN RELATIONS, PLAB, SOCIAL RECEPTIONS, LABOR UNION OFFICIALS, DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS, FOREIGN POLICY POSITION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 08 APR 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: saccheem
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976PARIS10291
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: RR
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760134-0415
From: PARIS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760483/aaaacspj.tel
Line Count: 203
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 76 PARIS 10290
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: saccheem
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 19 APR 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <19 APR 2004 by buchant0>; APPROVED <17 AUG 2004 by saccheem>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: VIEWS ON FRENCH POLITICAL SCENE BY LABOR LEADER BERGERON
TAGS: PINT, ELAB, FR, IT, FW, (BERGERON, ANDRE)
To: SECSTATE WASHDC BORDEAUX LYON MARSEILLE MARTINIQUE NICE STRASBOURG
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006